

December 20, 2018

**Subject:** Transformative Climate Communities Planning Grant  
Recommendations

**Reporting Period:** November 2018 – December 2018

**Staff Lead:** TCC Program Staff

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### **Recommended Actions:**

Approve staff recommendation to award \$800,000 in FY 2018-2019 Proposition 84 funding to four (4) projects for the Transformative Climate Communities (TCC) Planning Grants Program to undertake land use planning and related activities.

The TCC Program Staff also requests the Council to authorize the SGC Executive Director to award a grant to the fifth-ranked applicant if further funds become available.

### **Background:**

Passed by California voters in 2006, Proposition 84 appropriated funding for a variety of activities designed to protect the State's natural resources, including the Sustainable Communities Planning Grants and Incentives Program (SCPGL). The Council approved three sets of awards for SCPGL, including \$16 million at its June 3, 2014 meeting. In July 2018, The Council approved the use of reimbursed Proposition 84 funds to support TCC Round II Planning Grants.

The purpose of the TCC Planning Grant program is to assist communities in developing compelling and feasible proposals for a TCC Implementation Grant. In addition to using the funds to plan for the transformative components of the Implementation Grant application, communities are required to explain how activities are consistent with the State's Planning Priorities, identified in Section 65041.1 of the Government Code. Planning priorities focus on promoting infill development and equity by rehabilitating, maintaining and improving existing infrastructure; protecting, preserving and enhancing environmental and agricultural lands and natural and recreational resources, and encouraging location and resource efficient new development.

### **2018 Round II Application Process:**

Updates to the TCC Round II Program Guidelines were approved by the Strategic Growth Council on July 31, 2018. The TCC Program released a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) on August 15, 2018, that called for planning grant applications to be submitted by Tuesday, October 30, 2018. The NOFA indicated that \$800,000 would be available for up to four (4) communities to receive planning grant awards.

### **Application Review Process:**

A total of seven (7) planning grant applications were received for this solicitation, and a complete list of applicants can be found in Attachment B, Project Summaries and Maps.

All applications were reviewed according to the following process:

### Completeness Check:

After receiving the applications, TCC Program Staff reviewed the submitted application materials for completeness. This included determining if project areas were eligible, reviewing the applications for missing documents, and ensuring that the project workbooks were completed correctly. Applicants were given two (2) business days to correct any issues identified by Program Staff.

### Interagency Review Panel

Program Staff developed a scoring rubric for the planning grants by using the scoring criteria listed in the TCC guidelines. Program Staff also developed detailed instructions for the Interagency Review Panel (Panel) to provide direction on how to assign scores for the applications. The Panel was selected by Program Staff and consisted of twelve (12) reviewers from eight (8) agencies and departments. Each reviewer was assigned four (4) applications to review and each application was reviewed by at least six (6) reviewers.

### Pre-Deliberation and Final Deliberation

Following the review of the applications, the Panel convened on two (2) separate days. During the Pre-Deliberation meeting, Panelists engaged in a high-level overview of each application. They discussed their findings as well as their interpretations of specific scoring criteria.

During the Final Deliberation, Program Staff facilitated a detailed analysis for each application to finalize the scores.

## **Recommended Awards:**

After the final deliberation, the scores from each of the reviewers were averaged to determine the final score for the application. Staff is recommending that the top four scoring applications be approved by the Council for funding.

The recommended applicants to receive funding for TCC Round II are: South Los Angeles, Tulare County, McFarland, and Bakersfield.<sup>1</sup>

In South Los Angeles, the City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning will partner with several local, community-based organizations that are also co-applicants on the grant to create the Climate Commons Collaborative. The Collaborative will develop the South Los Angeles Climate Commons Plan and refine strategies in three areas: 1) Housing and Parks, 2) Land Use and Jobs, and 3) Transportation, Air Quality and Community Health.

Tulare County proposes to develop a community-level climate adaptation plan for the rural community in the Matheny Tract. The plan will identify priorities and recommend community-specific solutions to climate adaptation, in collaboration with county agencies and community-based organizations.

The City of McFarland will work to identify projects throughout the City that will have the most environmental impact and create a healthier McFarland. They will host four public workshops with partner organizations, including the McFarland Unified School District, Cesar Chavez Foundation, Chamber of Commerce, and Kern Council of Government, to solicit input on strategies to increase housing affordability and transportation options in the project area. This engagement process is

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<sup>1</sup> The average scores for all of the Planning Grant applications can be found in Attachment A.

intended to help McFarland develop a list of projects to include in an Implementation Grant application.

In the City of Bakersfield, the applicant and co-applicants will conduct studies and community outreach activities to develop a plan that prioritizes alternative transportation, affordable housing and workforce development projects to be included in a future TCC Implementation Grant application. Partners include the Kern Council of Governments, Center on Race, Poverty and the Environment, Bike Bakersfield, and California Walks. The proposal builds on previous planning activities conducted for the High Speed Rail Station Area Plan.

All of the selected applications had strong involvement from local community groups and clearly explained how those groups would be involved in the planning activities. The awarded applicants also explained how they will use the funds to prepare for a TCC Implementation Grant and how their project area would be an ideal location for transformation through a larger funding awarded.

As Attachment A shows, the City of Indio's application ranked fifth after the review process, very closely behind Bakersfield. The City of Indio proposes to examine existing local and regional plans, and to outline a pathway to a mixed-use, multi-modal, and multi-faceted development to improve community well-being. In the event that the Strategic Growth Council approves additional Proposition 84 funding to be spent for Round II of TCC, staff recommends that the City of Indio receive funding.

### **Applications Not Recommended for Funding:**

In addition to the City of Indio, two additional applications were not recommended for funding: the cities of Pico Rivera and Blythe.

The City of Pico Rivera proposes to conduct two studies related to electrifying the public transportation fleet and implementing electric vehicle infrastructure. The City of Blythe proposes to develop a Downtown Climate Action Plan to identify and prioritize active transportation, green infrastructure, parks, and affordable housing projects that achieve greenhouse gas reduction goals and are competitive for future opportunities.

The three applications that are not being recommended for funding all demonstrated the need for planning activities in their particular planning area. However, they were not as strong in demonstrating how they would use the funds to prepare for the various transformational elements of a TCC implementation grant. They also did not have the same level of meaningful community engagement planned with local residents and community organizations.

### **Next Steps:**

Following approval by the Council, TCC Program Staff (Program Staff) will enter into a Post-award Consultation phase with each awardee. During this phase, Program Staff will work with the awardee to modify and refine the submitted application materials to ensure it follows all statutory, administrative, and TCC Program requirements. Awarded applications are also subject to modifications based on input from the Council and/or application reviewers. Program Staff will work with awardees during this phase to develop a grant agreement and review grant administration procedures.

## Attachment A: Planning Grant Scores

The Planning Grant scores for each of the applications averaged across all reviewers are below.

City/County	Average
South Los Angeles	92
Tulare County	83
McFarland	79
Bakersfield	78
Indio	76
Pico Rivera	68
Blythe	66

## Attachment B: Project Summaries and Maps

*The first four applications listed are recommended for funding.*

Planning Grant Application: South Los Angeles, “South LA Climate Commons Collaborative: Aligning State and Local Priorities with a Community Vision”

Co-applicants: Brotherhood Crusade, LA Neighborhood Land Trust, Strategic Actions for a Just Economy, Strategic Concepts in Policy Organizing and Education, Slate-Z, TRUST South LA

Total Request: \$200,000.12

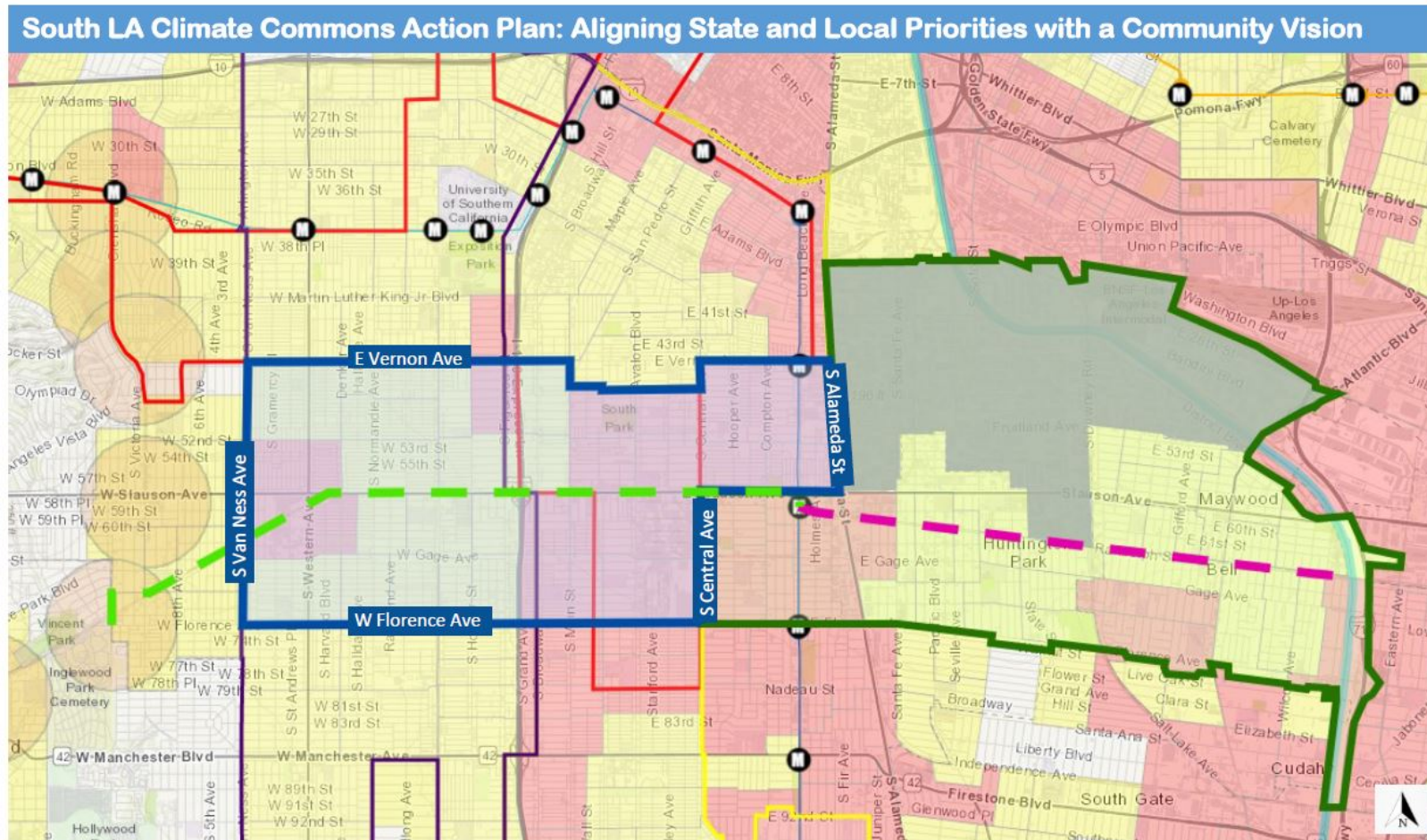
Project Summary: The Department of City Planning will partner with several local community-based organizations to create the Climate Commons Collaborative. The Collaborative will develop the South Los Angeles Climate Commons Plan (CCP) for a Project Area that includes several neighborhoods in South Los Angeles: Hyde Park, Chesterfield Square, Manchester Square, Vermont Knolls, Harvard Park, Vermont Slauson, and Florence. The Project Area was determined after the completion of a needs assessment, asset mapping activity, identification of large-scale projects and leveraged funding opportunities in the region, and consultation with various technical assistance providers. The Plan will include strategies in three areas:

- 1) Housing and Parks;
- 2) Land Use and Jobs; and
- 3) Transportation, Air Quality and Community Health.

The proposed Climate Commons Plan is consistent with and builds upon the Slauson Corridor Transit Neighborhood Plan, the South Los Angeles Community Plan, Southeast Los Angeles Community Plan, the Vision Zero Action Plan, the City's Housing Element, Sustainable City pLAn, and the SCAG 2012-20135 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy.

Summary of Deliberation Discussion: The proposal is comprehensive and addresses the community's specific needs, resources, and opportunities. The proposal also includes strong and diverse partners, deep community partnerships, and clearly defined roles for all the partners. The review panel felt the grant would help prepare the applicants for the TCC Implementation Grant.





### Legend

Planning Activities Area,  
City of Los Angeles



Coalition Building and  
Partnership Development Area,  
LA County + Local Jurisdictions



SLATE-Z Promise Zone



Community Plan Areas



Southeast Los Angeles



South Los Angeles

Metro Rail to Rail (A)



Metro Rail to River (B)



Los Angeles River



Metro Rail Lines



Blue Line

Expo Line

Gold Line

Metro Stations



Rail Under Construction



CalEnviroScreen 3.0



Top 5%



Top 25%

Insufficient CES data,  
City of Vernon industrial area



CALIFORNIA STRATEGIC  
GROWTH COUNCIL

Planning Grant Application: Tulare County, “Matheny Tract Climate Adaptation Plan”

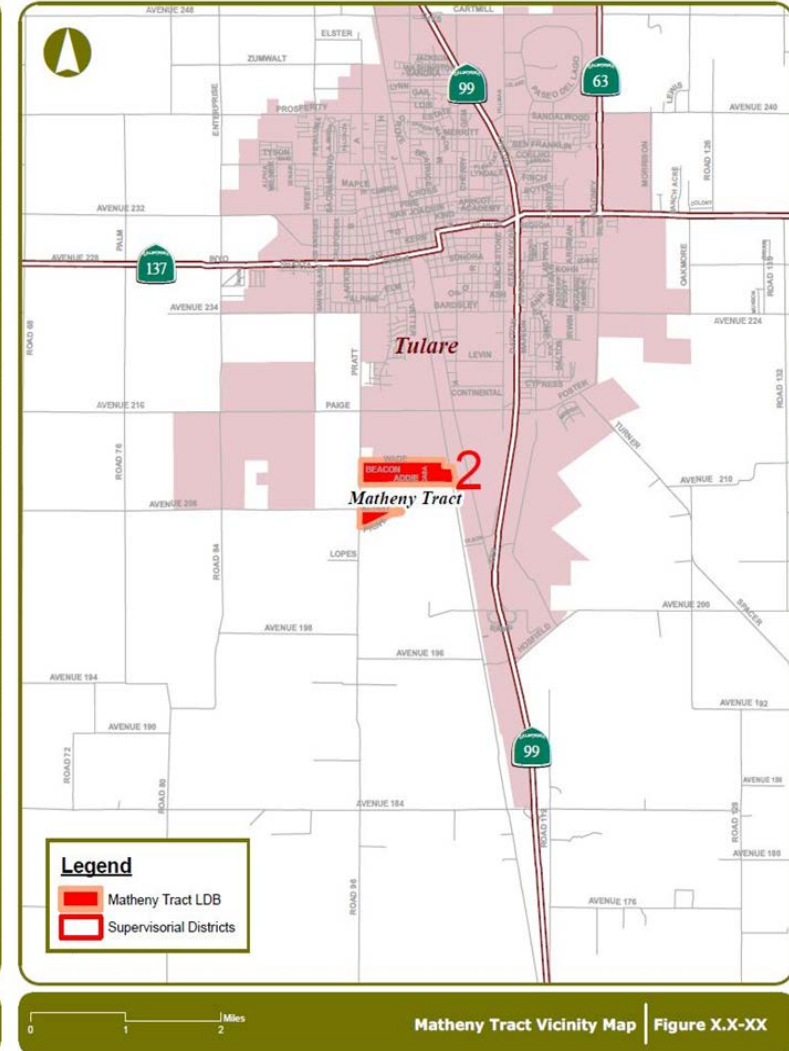
Co-applicants: Tulare Health and Human Services Agency

Total Request: \$200,000

Project Summary: The County of Tulare County to develop a community-level climate adaptation plan for the rural community of Matheny Tract, an area identified as 85-90% disadvantaged per CalEnviroScreen 3.0. Matheny Tract is an unincorporated community of about 188 acres with approximately 300 homes near the southwest boarder of the City of Tulare. The plan is intended to improve outcomes for the Project Area’s most vulnerable residents by providing residents to identify priorities and recommend community-specific solutions to climate adaptation, and will be developed in collaboration with county agencies, community-based organizations, and community groups. Through a series of workshops and grassroots outreach, this plan will include multiple, coordinated greenhouse gas emission reduction projects that provide local economic, environmental, and health benefits; and a list of policies and funding sources to support climate adaptation county-wide will also be developed.

Summary of Deliberation Discussion: The proposal will address the Planning Area’s specific infrastructure challenges. The partnership structure was diverse and demonstrated clear roles and responsibilities for the proposed activities. The review panel would like the planning activities to address conflicting land use issues in the area, and further develop the budget detail.







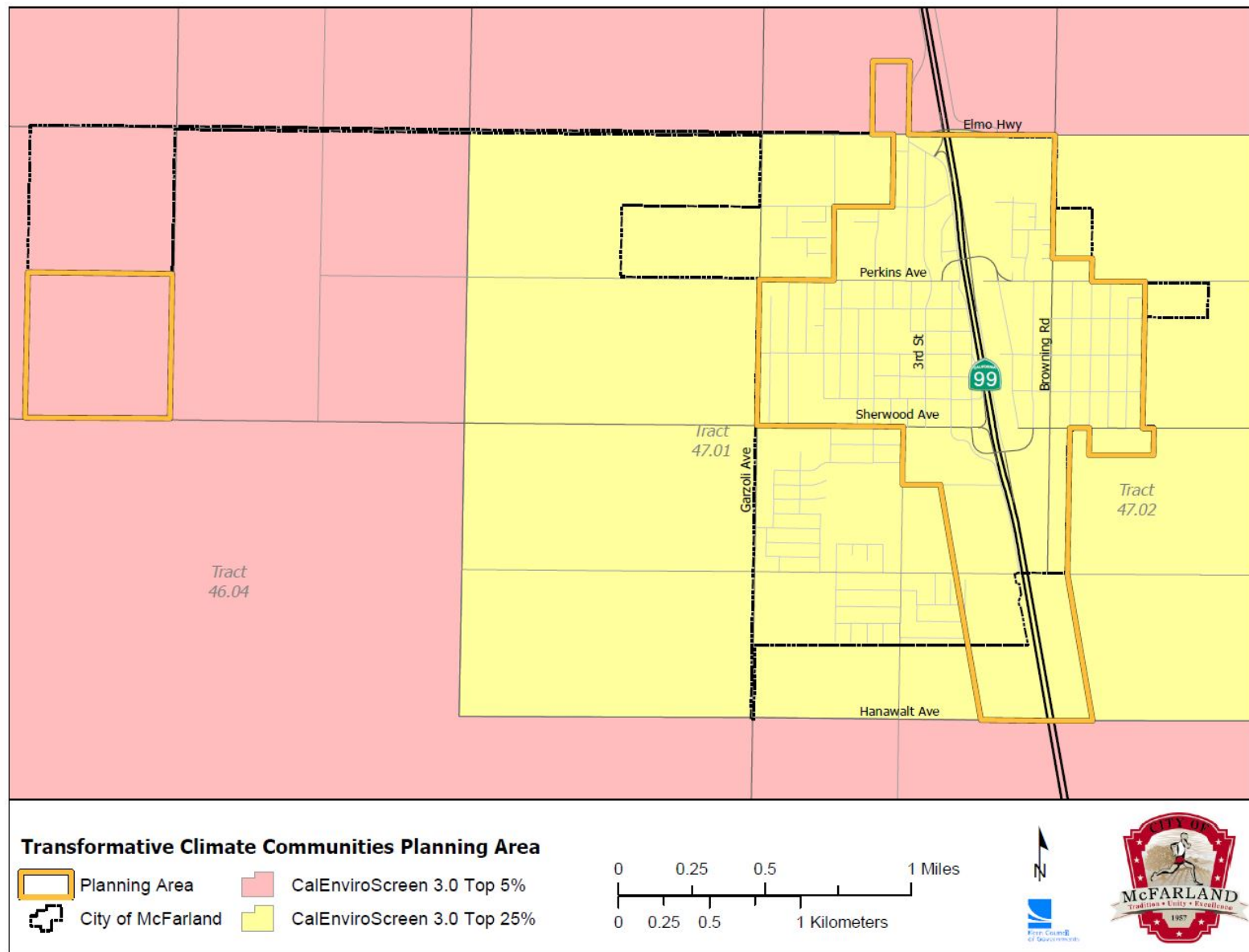
Planning Grant Application Name: City of McFarland, “McFarland Transformational Planning”

Co-applicants: McFarland Tri-Agency Partners, McFarland Unified School District, McFarland Recreation and Park District

Total Request: \$198,652.15

Project Summary: The City of McFarland is seeking a TCC Planning Grant to assist with identifying projects in the City’s disadvantaged areas that will have the most environmental impact and create a healthier McFarland. The City will host four public workshops with partner organizations, including the McFarland Unified School District, the Cesar Chavez Foundation, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Kern Council of Government. The purpose of the public meetings will be to solicit input on strategies to increase the availability of affordable housing and transportation options in the project area. During the workshops, recent planning studies and maps will be presented to help residents identify the future projects. The workshop organizers will also conduct a survey using survey monkey.

Summary of Deliberation Discussion: The panelists agreed that McFarland demonstrates a need for planning activities since it is a dense, walkable city with limited staff and planning capacity. Despite its small staff, the city completed a number of planning documents in the past few years, including the City of McFarland Bicycle Master Plan, a 2013 Complete Streets Plan, and a 2018 General Plan Amendment. Another strength of the application is that the city enlisted numerous organizations and partners when developing its plan. The review panel would like further development of the targeted transformative plan elements and proposed activities.



Planning Grant Application Name: City of Bakersfield, “Revitalizing Downtown Bakersfield: Live, Work, Play”

Co-Applicants: Housing Authority of the County of Kern, Kern County Employers’ Training Resource

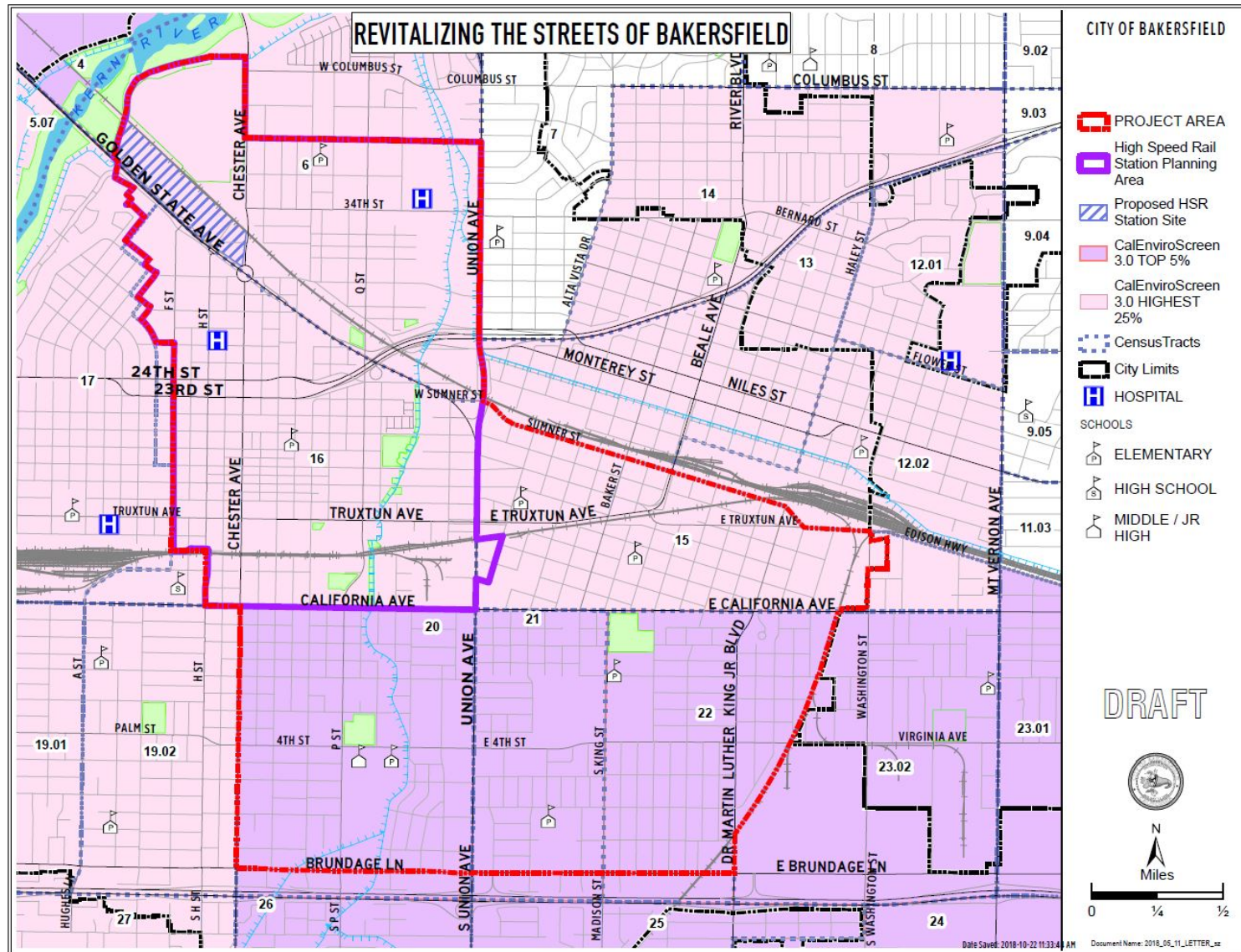
Total Request: \$200,000

Project Summary: The City of Bakersfield and its Co-applicants are seeking a TCC Planning Grant to conduct studies and community outreach activities to develop a plan that prioritizes alternative transportation, affordable housing and workforce development projects to be included in a future TCC Implementation Grant application. The Planning Area encompasses the downtown area and historic neighborhoods to the east and south and includes the High Speed Rail Station area. The proposed studies of the plan include:

- 1) Complete an Affordable Housing Site Analysis that identifies potential locations for future affordable housing projects and the steps needed to ensure that they are shovel ready for the next rounds of TCC Implementation Grant funding;
- 2) Conduct a Workforce Development Demographic and Labor Market Study that identifies workforce development needs of residents in the Planning Area, as well as potential strategies to support employment related activities beyond the Workforce Opportunities and Investment Act, and conduct community outreach on workforce development needs; and
- 3) Develop an Alternative Transportation, Housing and Workforce Development Prioritization Plan, that works with community residents to prioritize alternative transportation projects included in the High Speed Rail Station Area, to maximize connections for residents of the Planning Area to housing and workforce development activities while also reducing Greenhouse Gas emissions.

Additional project partners include the Kern Council of Governments, the Center on Race, Poverty and the Environment, Bike Bakersfield, and California Walks that will assist with community outreach and technical aspects of the grant.

Summary of Deliberation Discussion: The proposal builds upon previous planning activities such as High Speed Rail Station Area Plan, Bicycle Transportation Plan and Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy. The proposal also includes a diverse coalition of co-applicants and project partners with expertise with community outreach, active transportation and planning activities. The review panel would like clarification on how the proposal will coordinate with similar studies conducted by housing agencies and workforce development boards.





Planning Grant Application Name: City of Indio, “Indio Transformative Climate Communities Plan”

Co-applicants: Coachella Valley Association of Governments

Total Request: \$182,750

Project Summary: The City of Indio and Coachella Valley Association of Governments are seeking TCC funding for a Transformative Climate Communities Plan to identify and prioritize investments that will catalyze economic and environmental transformation in the most disadvantaged areas in the City of Indio. The Plan will facilitate strategies that maximize neighborhood-level environmental, public health, workforce, and economic benefits over the proposed Planning Area in Downtown Indio and the Jewel Community. The proposed planning activities will outline a pathway to mixed-use, multi-modal and multi-faceted development to improve community well-being. This will be done through the analyses of existing local and regional plans, and management of stakeholder and community engagement to gain input for the development of the TCC Plan.

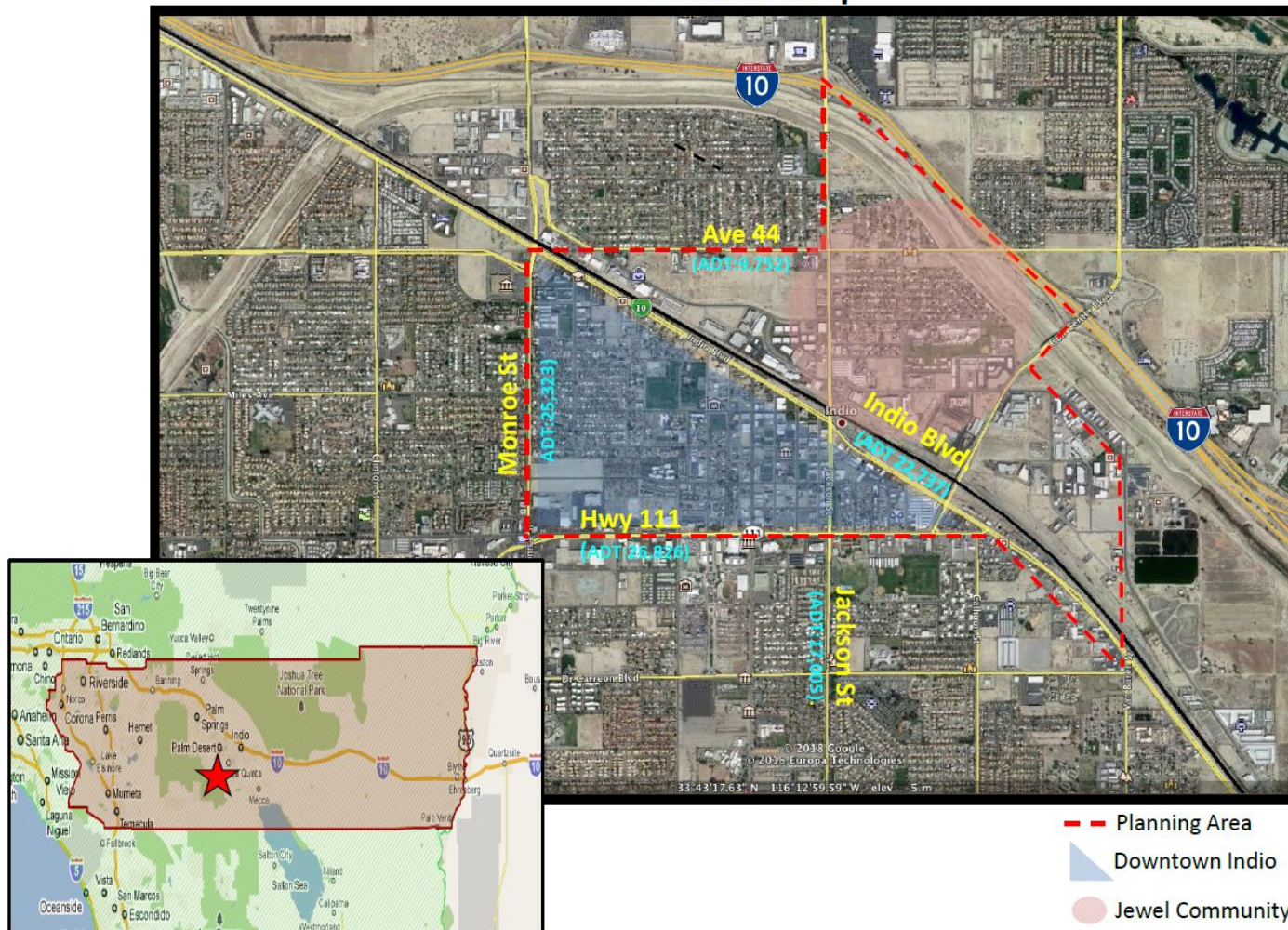
Summary of Deliberation Discussion: The proposal clearly described the needs of the community and appears to connect to the goals of the TCC Program. One strength of the application is that the local school district, which is the biggest employer in the area, is a Partner for the project. The review panel wanted clarification on the level of involvement of the Community Based Organizations and outreach groups active within the area.



**2018 Transformative Climate Communities Program**  
**City of Indio & Coachella Valley Association of Governments**  
**Transformative Climate Communities Plan**



### Location Map



Planning Grant Application Name: City of Pico Rivera, “The Local Development and Sustainability Project”

Co-applicants: City of Montebello, Gateway Cities Council of Governments

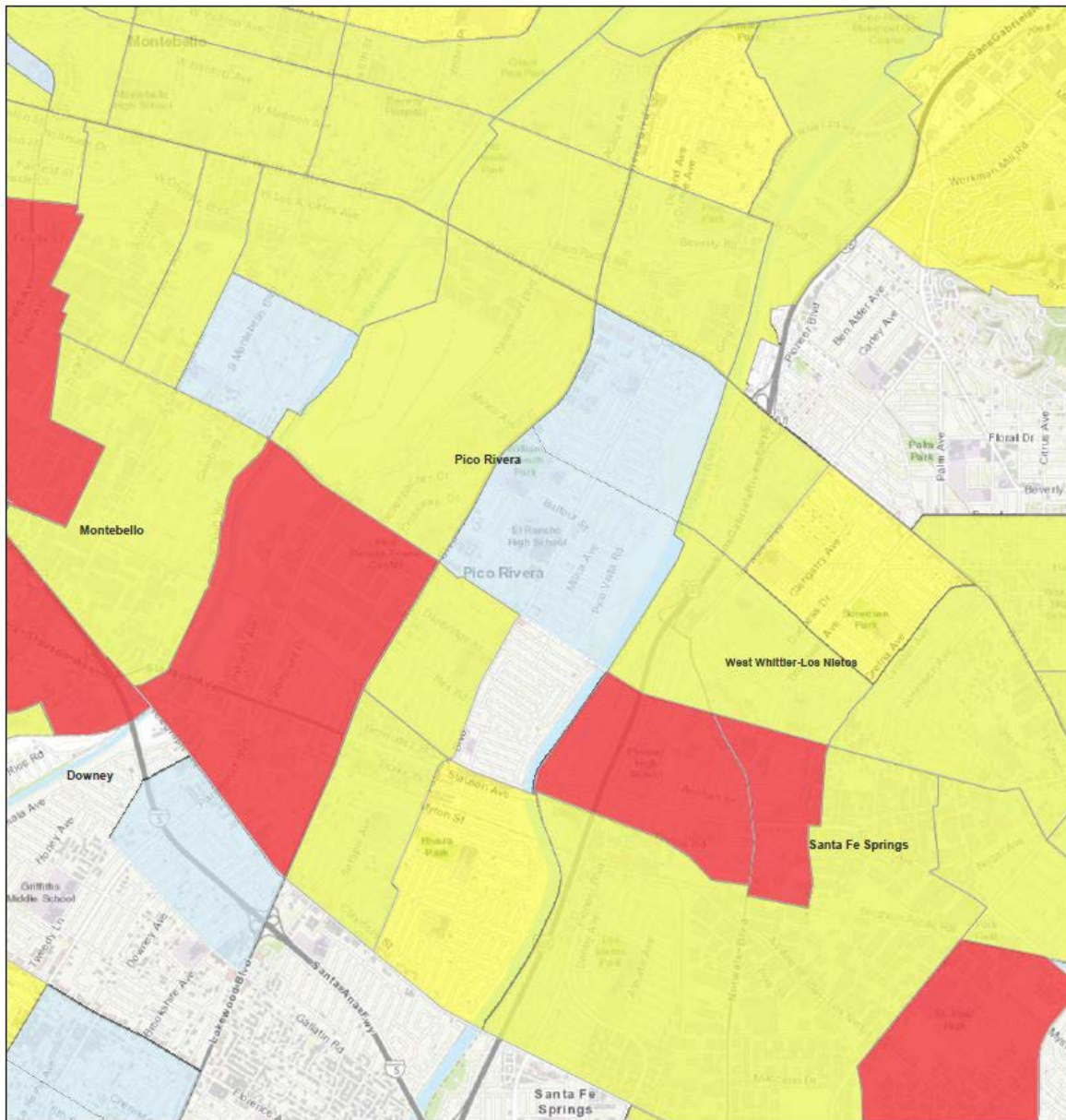
Total Request: \$200,000

Summary of Proposal: The City of Pico Rivera is seeking a TCC Planning Grant to develop and implement two sustainable transportation components within the Planning Area. The Planning Area covers the breadth of the City of Pico Rivera, approximately nine square miles. The objective of the Planning Grant is to improve the efficiency of the City’s transit system by aligning with regional efforts and reducing carbon emissions for the most frequently used transit services. The planning studies are proposed to help gather needed data to better understand baseline traffic in the city and determine the best approach to electrifying transportation in the area. The proposed transportation components are:

- 1) “Public Transportation Electrification Study” in partnership with the City of Montebello to determine the feasibility an all-electric bus fleet; and
- 2) “Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Investment Planning Study” in step with regional transportation study efforts.

Summary of Deliberation Discussion: The proposal provided specific details on how the grant funding would be spent and appeared to be feasible to complete within the 1-year timeframe. Proposal is unclear, however, on how the plans would lead to positive outcomes for the community, and if community engagement would be fully developed. The review panel commented that the proposal was not in-line with the TCC Program’s objectives.







Name: City of Blythe, “Re-envision Blythe: Downtown Climate Action Plan”

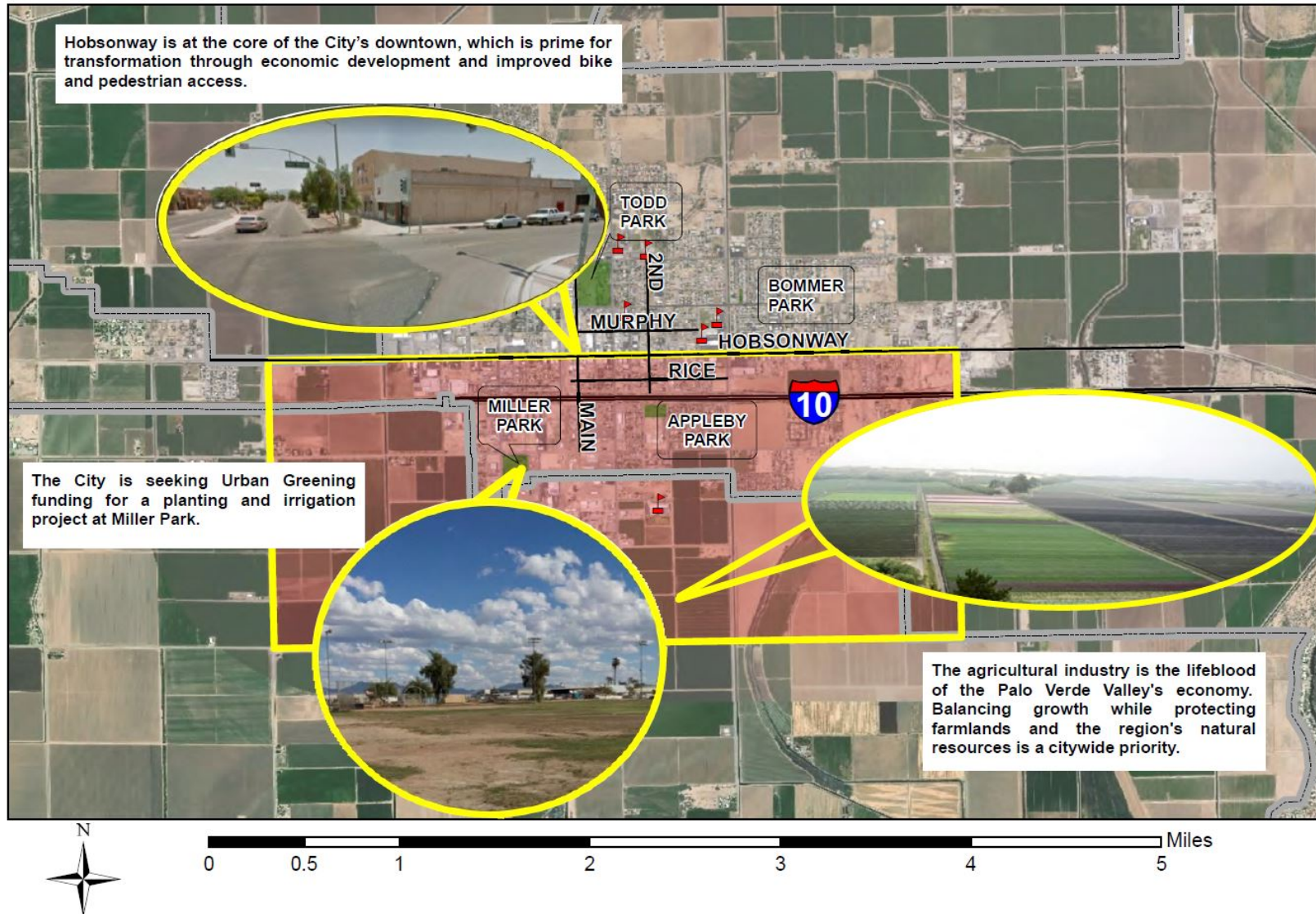
Co-applicants: Coachella Valley Association of Governments

Total Request: \$194,050

Project Summary: The City of Blythe proposes to develop the “Re-Envision Blythe: Downtown Climate Action Plan” to identify and prioritize active transportation, green infrastructure, parks, and affordable housing projects that achieve greenhouse gas reduction goals and are competitive for future climate investment opportunities. Downtown Blythe was designated an “Opportunity Zone” in 2017, and the proposed plan would build on the 2012 Climate Action Plan effort. The City proposes to host project meetings with partnering public agencies – the Palo Verde Valley Transit Agency, Blythe Area Chamber of Commerce, and regional and state elected officials – and engage downtown residents and businesses through outreach materials, online feedback surveys, and community meetings. Coachella Valley Association of Governments would provide organizational capacity support for consultant hiring, community outreach, and Geographical Information Systems work.

Summary of Deliberation Discussion: The proposal provided a suitable Planning Area that demonstrates a need for climate planning activities. The proposal also demonstrated strong public agency support and the need to re-engage the community in planning processes. The review panel wanted clarification on the general description of the targeted plan components, how the proposal would address the benefits to disadvantaged community residents, and the plan to engage residents that face barriers to engagement, such as linguistic barriers.

# Re-Envision Blythe Planning Area



## Legend

- Blythe Planning Area
- City Boundaries
- Schools
- Roads

